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INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE ON DOCUMENTATION

MEMORANDUM FOR: IAC Committee on Documentation

SUBJECT : Report of a Visit to Libraries in Nearby Virginia

The attached is circulated for the information of the
members.


Paul A. Borel
Chairman

Attachment

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REPORT OF A VISIT TO LIBRARIES IN NEARBY VIRGINIA

25X1

July 21-23, 1958

PARTICIPANTS:

PURPOSE:

To determine what library facilities are available in nearby Virginia to supplement the Vital Materials Collection in the event of an emergency.

ITINERARY:

Culpepper	-	Public Library
Charlottesville	-	University of Virginia Public Library
Lexington	-	Virginia Military Institute Washington and Lee University
Lynchburg	-	Lynchburg College Randolph-Macon Woman's College Babcock and Wilcox Atomic Energy Division
Richmond	-	Public Library University of Richmond
Ashland	-	Randolph-Macon College
Fredericksburg	-	Mary Washington College

INDIVIDUAL FINDINGS:

Culpepper Public Library: The library, situated on the second floor of the municipal building, was closed at the time of our arrival but a good view of the interior could be obtained through the glass doors. The collection seems to be composed of light reading--fiction and non-fiction. A very small reference collection, mainly two sets of encyclopedias, could be seen.

University of Virginia Library: This library is a four story building with two floors below ground level, and contains about 825,000 volumes. It includes departmental libraries in Astronomy, Chemistry, Engineering, Fine Arts, Geology, Law, Mathematics, Medicine, Nursing, Physics, Economics, and a small collection in the Judge Advocate General's School. All of these collections are reflected in the main catalog, with the exception of the JAG collection.

The collection of English language material in this library is excellent. The reference collection contains most of the necessary biographical and industrial directories. The scientific and technical materials are more extensive than those in other libraries visited--strongest in Physics and Medicine. The University Library is a U.S. Government document repository and receives most government documents including the Foreign Broadcast Information Service. A good basic collection of some 100,000 maps is maintained and there are reproduction facilities available on one of the lower floors.

This library has the only collection of foreign language publications worth noting. It receives a great many West European periodicals and a few East European periodicals, as well as a few foreign industrial directories. Some Arabic and Oriental materials are received but are not handled by the library (they are sent directly to instructors). It had the only set of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia found in any of the libraries visited.

A few foreign bank bulletins are received. There are a few books in the Cyrillic alphabet but it is apparent that English language editions are purchased wherever possible. No Oriental or Arabic materials are cataloged. The dictionary collection is good.

Visits were made to the Judge Advocate General School and the Law Library. The JAG school collection is not adequate and apparently the students use the fine Law Library of the University which also includes a separate collection of books on International Law.

Charlottesville Public Library: This small public library contains 33,000 volumes, mostly in fiction and light non-fiction. The biographical references are American and English and hardly any industrial information is available. The catalog is quite small and indicates no foreign material of value.

Virginia Military Institute Library: There are supposedly 100,000 volumes in this library but a good proportion of this figure must be due to the fact that the library is a U.S. Government document repository since the collection did not seem to be that large. The building has one floor below ground level. The emphasis is on military subjects but even in this field the library is not outstanding. With the exception of a few French and German publications, there are no foreign publications. The collection is strong in literature and history, and weak in economics, science and technology. The dictionary collection is small and includes one Russian and one Chinese dictionary. No industrial

catalogs are available. The Chemistry building houses a small chemical collection.

Washington and Lee University Library: This library has about 170,000 volumes, heavily weighted in favor of literature and history, and is a three story building with one floor below ground level. The reference collection contains a good set of dictionaries and some industrial directories, including Thomas, Moody's and Poor's. Many of the directories, biographical in particular, are out of date. There is very little foreign language material and no Slavic, Oriental or Arabic publications. The medicine and technology collections are not adequate. Departmental libraries in Law, Chemistry, Physics, Commerce and Journalism are maintained, the Law Library being the most extensive of these. The library is a U.S. Government document repository and the catalog contains a few unclassified R & A reports issued by the Research and Analysis Branch of OSS.

Randolph-Macon Woman's College: The Library was not open when we arrived but from what we could see through the open windows the collection seemed to be a small public library type.

Babcock and Wilcox Co., Atomic Energy Division: We had wanted to visit this library since it seemed to be the only one with a comprehensive collection on atomic energy. It did not take long for us to learn that the library is not open to visitors and that a security clearance is required and so we quickly dropped the matter.

Lynchburg College Library: This library is on one floor, and contains some 35,000 volumes. It features religious and educational publications. There is little in the collection that would be of value to the Agency.

Richmond Public Library: A very substantial public library, containing about 250,000 volumes. In addition to the usual material found in a public library, this library has a fine collection of trade and industrial periodicals, as well as a set of Sweet's catalogs. The technical reference books are better than those in most of the other libraries visited. The dictionary collection is adequate. Again, the prime weakness is in the lack of foreign publications, especially biographical and industrial.

Richmond University Library: This library has about 130,000 volumes and occupies two floors. The two good features are a set of U.S. Government documents and fine reproduction facilities on the second floor. The collections in economics and technology could stand beefing up. No foreign directories are in the collection.

Randolph-Macon College: The library was closed for the month. The library building did not seem impressive from the outside.

Mary Washington College: This library, a two story building, contains 120,000 volumes with emphasis on art, literature, history and American biography. The collections in science and technology are at best, elementary. However, a new science

building is being constructed and it is possible that the science collection may be increased. The dictionary collection is adequate. Many of the biographical volumes are out of date and no foreign directories are available. The periodical collection is small and includes few in the science and technology fields.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: Of the libraries visited, the University of Virginia Library, by far, would be of most value to the Agency in time of emergency. It is the only library which receives any Slavic periodicals (although some are a year behind); it is the only library to have the Great Soviet Encyclopedia; it is the only library to have a respectable collection on Russian politics; and it is the only library to have foreign biographical and industrial information. In short, its collection is closer to what we were looking for than any of the other libraries. Among the other libraries, the Richmond Public Library could be of some value in an emergency operation. The other libraries would be of limited value.

One of the things that impressed us in all the libraries was the spaciousness--the shelving which could accommodate many more books, the large and comfortable reading rooms, and the huge spaces around the catalogs. Having worked in government libraries for so long, we had forgotten how spacious libraries can and should be.